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ested to promote peace rather than to promote war. If they are interested to promote war, the conference can accomplish nothing. If they are interested to promote peace, they ought to be willing to agree to spend not to exceed 70 per cent of their income for purposes of war. If such a plan were adopted, each nation could fool away its money upon any type of war machine it saw fit, so long as the total expense did not exceed the percentage agreed upon. The self-esteem of no particular military interests would be touched. They who believe in the necessity for effective death-dealing instruments could accept such a solution without violence to their faith. Reducing military expenses by 23 per cent would release enormous sums for constructive social effort in science, education, industry, and the arts. It would be a limitation indeed. It would go a long way toward meeting the demands of the stricken peoples of the world. It would be an attestation of faith and good will. It would remove the problem of international relations from the realm of militarism to the realm of economics and finance. It would immeasurably strengthen the coming generation for the great tasks immediately before.

We do not contend that this solution is simple. It presents its own difficulties. Some will say the percentage is too low, others that it is too high. Some will be interested to know what is meant by the word "income." Our only thought is that among the suggestions brought to our attention, this presents the fewest difficulties.

REDUCING ARMAMENT

(WRITING NOVEMBER 12.)

THE VIEWS we dared to express yesterday relative to the method of reducing armaments are not the views of the American delegates to the Conference on the Limitation of Armament. Mr. Hughes has voiced the collective judgment of the American conferees, and the reduction, it appears, is to be not in percentages of income, but in terms of battleships. The capital ship programs, actual and projected, are to be abandoned. Certain older ships are to be scrapped. Thus we are presented with concrete proposals, looking toward a definite agreement for the limitation of naval armament. The imperative economic demands are to be met, at least in part. The spirit of the American proposal is action. "Plausible suggestions of postponement" and "impracticable counsels of perfection" are ignored. The American pronouncement is, in substance, the way to reduce is to reduce.

We see difficulties in the way of this approach to the problem. It will be said that the day of the battleship has passed. Scrapping the battleships, therefore, will

have little influence upon the problems of war and peace. The new inventions and the new instruments of destruction in the air, on the sea, under the sea, the more deadly explosives and poisonous gases will leave the same old suspicions, hatreds, and prospects of war. International policies are not touched by such a proposal. In the light of these things, even the good faith of America may be questioned in various quarters.

But we do not sympathize with this counsel of pessimism. The American proposal itself is a policy of real international importance. It will end in a relief from the burdens of taxation. It is surprisingly simple. Devoid of international offense, the plan is reasonable and seems to be realizable. Its direct, unequivocal, unconventional approach takes the whole problem from the realm of the merely exclusive interest to that of the common advantage. If it appear to be business idealism, it is ideal business. It is a dare to the destroying, silly, damning philosophy of brute force. It is a fine intelligence applied to international affairs. Free as it is from all atmosphere of the old dickering diplomacy, it forecasts a new order in the world. By it the peace movement is raised again from the cry of impotence to the plane of practical achievement. As by magic, the collective conscience, the common soul of human kind, has become vocal once more, somewhat as was the case November 11, 1918. Coming from a country abundantly able to compete with other nations to the uttermost, the voice is the voice of strength. Men listening to the American Secretary of State felt again with that ancient writer of Proverbs, that "the righteous are bold as a lion." They who listened felt the intensity and force of the situation. This November 12 the world is thrilled, and the day will be remembered as marking an epoch in history.

IS THE END OF WAR POSSIBLE?

IN HIS address November 11 over the grave of the unknown soldier, President Harding heartened men to believe again in the possibility of a warless world. Is the end of war possible? Since the month of July, 1914, there have been comparatively few bold enough to say openly that the abolition of international wars is an achievable ideal. Statesmen, addressing themselves to the problems of international peace, have contented themselves with some such expressions as "lessening the evils of war," "reducing the frequency of wars," "making war less certain." Writers and speakers are wont to qualify their efforts in behalf of international peace with these remarks: "Of course, it is impossible to overcome all wars"; "We have always had war and we shall always have war"; "We can only work for the postponement of war." Statesmen, public men gen-

erally, are led by caution to avoid the appearance of too much idealism.

As a means of demonstrating their sanity, they frequently criticise others for their idealisms, calling them names indeed—ridiculous, ludicrous, grotesque, queer, wild-eyed, crazy, foolish, cranky, pacifistic. The younger the aspirant for public approval, the more caustic he tends to be.

It was in his old age that Benjamin Franklin remarked, "The older I grow, the more apt I am to doubt my own judgment of others." Much of the criticism hurled at the idealisms of other people is found in time to be "half-baked." That is true of those who seek the approval of themselves by lambasting the "pacifists."

Our conception of a pacifist is of a person who considers war, in itself and for itself, as the greatest of crimes; who believes it to be the duty of right thinking men and women to bend every effort to the avoidance of that crime. A pacifist is one who loves justice and hates war. If this be the true definition of a pacifist, and we believe it is, Mr. Harding and the rest of us are pacifists.

Just now the pacifists have been vindicated, and that from an unexpected quarter. Marshal Ferdinand Foch, supreme commander of the allied armies during the World War, said at a mass meeting held in the city of Detroit, Michigan, under date of November 7:

"War, in itself and for itself, is the greatest crime in the world, and the glory of victory, pursued for itself, is a crime. This world is made for peace and for work in peace time. The first duty is to work for our people, not to fight."

That is a remarkable statement, and heartening withal. It seems to be a settled conviction with this illustrious Frenchman. He said in Chicago:

"Peace—we shall have it soon on the same condition that we got war. We must fight for it in the moral sphere as we did in the physical sphere. Peace has been promised, from the first night of Christianity, only to men of good will. Good will must be in the bottom of the heart; without it, it is only a sham peace. . . . With a clear understanding of our duties and clear co-operation of our minds and proper co-operation of our vision, we can have a perfect peace. The elements which are needed for the procurement of this peace are the same as in war—unity of purpose within the nations themselves and unity among nations. This perspective leaves the future full of promise. The successful issue of the war has been attributed to unity of command. The unity of command was not the real, underlying cause. Far above the unity of command was the unity of feeling and the unity of ideals."

We have been led to think of Marshal Foch as a militarist, pure and simple. Some of his recommendations to the conferees at the Paris Peace Conference, particularly with reference to the area of the Rhine, gave color

to that impression. But now, behold! Marshal Ferdinand Foch, Supreme Commander of the Allied Armies during the World War, pacifist, agreeing with the President of the United States, that the abolition of war is an attainable ideal.

ROCKING THE PANAMA BOAT

OUR "soundest casuists" do not seem to be in doubt about the question whether or not American coastwise shipping should be exempt from the payment of tolls through the Panama Canal; but they certainly do not agree. One set of casuists says they should; the other that they should not.

There is no doubt that the United States occupies a rather anomalous position with reference to the Panama Canal. It can exempt any or all American shipping at the point of a gun, if it so choose; but, of course, the right to exempt will not be expressed that way. We are the administrator of the canal. As such, we are bound under the terms of a treaty to maintain that canal "between the two oceans for the benefit of mankind, on equal terms to all." Our merchant ships have the right to use the canal "on equal terms" with all other nations. While we of the United States are in no position to grant any special privileges to our shipping interests, we are certainly entitled to those rights and privileges exercised by other nations. Since Japan is, as a matter of fact, paying subsidies to her ships that pass through the canal in amounts sufficient to cover the charges for tolls; since France subsidizes her ships using the canal in amounts to cover the cost of tolls; since other nations are planning to do the same, there would seem to be no question as to the right of the United States similarly to subsidize its merchant ships, and for the same purpose. If the present law were enacted, exempting United States coastwise shipping from the payment of tolls, the effect would be to subsidize such American shipping from the Treasury of the United States. This is a part of the anomaly of our situation.

Take the matter of the effect upon the United States Treasury were the exemptions to be made. Examining the data available for the fiscal year 1921, our attention is arrested by the facts. During this period the United States merchant ships paid tolls at the same rate as the merchant ships of other nations. The interest on capital invested, the cost of maintenance, and the \$250,000 paid annually to the State of Panama (we do not include the \$25,000,000 yet to be paid to Colombia), amounted to \$20,750,000. Receipts from tolls amounted to \$11,276,889.67. Of this last amount the sum of \$1,434,281.75 was collected from United States coastwise shipping. The significance of these facts is apparent. If the United States had been exempted from the payment of